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Data in this report are drawn from the most recent available statistics from RICE West Nile and other partners and the Report of the Executive Director of RICE West Nile to be presented to the Board, in February 2021.

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Who we are

Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment West Nile (RICE West Nile) is a human right and empowerment-oriented indigenous Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) based in the West Nile sub region of Uganda envisioned to a self-reliant, sustainable and holistically transformed society.

Core Values

- > Simplicity
- > Team spirit
- > Equity
- > Novelty
- > Safeguarding
- > Transparency and accountability

Mission

To Kindle and facilitate a people led and sustained protection of nature and wellbeing of humanity

Vision A self-reliant, sustainable and holistically transformed society

Strategic Focus

Protection and prevention of nature Household resilience and wellbeing Leading sustainably

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Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AGODA	Albertine Graben Oil Districts Association
AJWS	American Jewish World Service
BAPENECO	Bunyoro Albertine Petroleum Network on Environmental Conservation
BOD	Board of Directors
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CDDP	Community Drug Distribution Point
CHASE	Community Health and Sustainable Environment
COSU-OGG	Community Support for Sustainable Oil and Gas Governance
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DGF	Democratic Governance Facility
ERA	Elderly Emergency Rehabilitation Action
ERI	Enabling Rural Innovation
FGHR	Fund for Global Human Rights
GFC	Global Fund for Children
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICS	Improved Cook Stoves
IDI	Infectious Disease Institute
IGA	Income Generating Activities
KP	Key Population
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NANEP	Northern Albertine CSO Network on Environment and Petroleum
OVC	Orphans and other Vulnerable Children
PLE	Primary Leaving Examination
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
psn	Persons with Special Needs
RETs	Renewable Energy Technologies
RICE-WN	Rural Initiative for Community Empowerment West Nile
SHS	Solar Home System
STRENPO	Strengthening Resilience and Promoting Inclusive Governance Program
ТВ	Tuberculosis
ToTs	Trainer of Trainees
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WWF-UCO	World Wide Fund for Nature – Uganda Country Office



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Foreward

We as the Board of Directors of RICE West Nile do appreciate the tremendous work and impact that we have seen in the operations of the Organization despite the COVID-19 pandemic that the whole world to a standstill. We have all the confidence to say that it has been possible because of the competent team we have put in place.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of RICE West Nile, I thank the Secretariat for the hard work during the period January to December 2020. In addition, I personally thank the BoD and RICE West Nile key stakeholders including the staff for successfully developing, printing and disseminating the 2020-2024 Strategic plan to key stakeholders.

The RICE West Nile Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024 is as a result of a planning process spanning 5 years. It represents hard work on the part of the Strategic Planning Committee which was comprised of staff, trustees, volunteers and donors. In large part, the process was undertaken as a result of experiential growth in the organization and the addition of new assets – the gardens and an education department – which have substantially increased opportunities for public engagement.

We are proud that over time, we have a team of staff that is not only committed and competent but also willing and ready to learn. I appreciate the Executive Director for steering the team that worked tirelessly throughout the year. We in equal measure appreciate the Advisory Council for the oversight it has provided to the Board of Directors.

In a very special way, I do thank our partners and or Donors who committed resources to further RICE West Nile Projects. Our success as an Organization is your success too. Without the resources you committed, we would not have taken the strides that we have taken as an Organization. We believe that with continued partnership with you, we can do better. Upon a closer look at the Annual Report, you will discover that we were able to do much notwithstanding our financial constraints and pandemic that shook the country. That only goes a long way to prove to you the competence of RICE West Nile to handle bigger Projects and resources. With open hands, we look forward to a continued and lasting relationship with you.

Yours,

Can. Onesmus Dralega Board Chairperson

Executive Director's remarks

It is my pleasure to introduce our 2020 Annual Report that feeds in our new third Strategic Plan 2020-2021 with 3 summarized strategic foci as Conservation and Preservation of Nature, House Hold Resilience and Wellbeing and finally Leading Sustainably which form the framework of this Annual Report. I invite you to read the details therein.

I would like to start by appreciating the government of Uganda for the trust bestowed on us to operate without interruption, the confidence our development partners built in us over time, cooperation we received from our beneficiaries, the oversight role played by the governance bodies of RICE West Nile, the tireless effort exhibited by my dedicated staff to work day and night cannot be overemphasized to say are contributory to these achievements therein.

With "The sky is not the limit" as the theme for the year 2020, RICE West Nile implemented 10 projects funded by a range of donors missioning to Kindle and facilitate a people led and sustained protection of nature and wellbeing of humanity through the strategic focus area mentioned above. 100 boys and girls received scholastic materials for schooling, 901,000 seedlings were raised in three nursery bed sites managed by RICE West Nile, 906,000 trees planted in 2020, 504 women reached with family planning and 1976 reached during mobile medical clinics.

Through the friends of RICE West Nile we were able to reach and serve 306 PSN with food and sanitary items, 20 farmers and 80 farmers' groups supported with farm inputs, 3 tricycles donated to refugees and farmers and 1153 tippy established in Imvepi host and refugee communities as a rapid response and support to the local government COVID- 19 Task Force in our geographical areas. Finally, this page is merely a tip of the iceberg, meaning you have every reason to proceed and appreciate the great work done by opening and critically reading through the next pages that provides a summary of RICE West Nile projects and some organizational activities over the past 12 months including achievements organized under the core program areas, some challenges, lessons learnt and finances at a glance. We count on your honest feedback which we believe will make us better in the subsequent years.

Yours in service

Pax Sakari Executive Director

Key Achievements Overall Achievements

Community members reached through sensitization and awareness

One Energy Network Launched

Tippy Taps Established

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Renewable Energy Strategies Developed 634

Cook stoves and 224 Solar Home Systems Distributed



Tri-cycles donated to farmers and refugees 901,000 Seedlings Raised, 906,000 Planted

31 Stove Artisans	190 Boys and inis Supported in School
2 Women Empowerment Chilo, 14 Cition Advisory Councils	di Village Agents, 7 Mattis Moste Benycling Groups

15 CORPS, 35 ToTs, 8 Solar technicians, 6 Community Advocacy Groups

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SOL warmen	served with food and	reaction
tectived	sanitary	-
planning	Heres	dinci

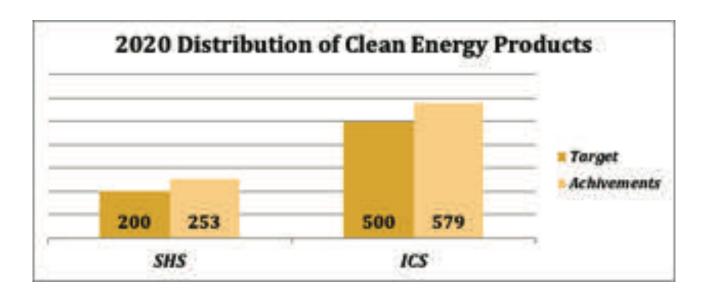
Protection and Prevention of Nature



Charcoal production and collection of firewood is a source of livelihood for many households in West Nile region. However, indiscriminate cutting of trees for these purposes among others has increased the manifestations of climate change in the region in form of prolonged dry spells, erratic rains and drought conditions. To mitigate these negative effects, RICE West Nile established two 2 tree nurseries in Rhino Camp and Imvepi refugee settlements through which 870,000 wood and fruit tree seedlings were raised and planted in communities and institutions Since 2017 World Wide Fund for Nature Uganda Country Office (WWF UCO) has continued to support Clean Energy Project to increase access to sustainable and renewable energy alternatives in the Albertine Graben to conserve high value forest ecosystems to benefit people and nature in Uganda.

In a bid to restore the tree cover in severely affected areas by deforestation like in Madi Okollo district, RICE West Nile mobilised 50 women from Uleppi Sub County to participate in tree planting to mitigate the impact of deforestation. In total, the 50 women planted 12,200 seedlings planted (9350 timber trees and 2850 fruit trees) with an average survival rate of 84% which was well above the recommended survival rate of 65% by the National Forestry Authority in Uganda.

Integrated natural resources management and promotion of sustainable incomes among households and institutions.



- Distributed Solar Home Systems (SHS) and Improved Cook Stoves (ICS) to communities in West Nile region.
- Three District Local Governments of Koboko, Arua and Nebbi Renewable Energy Access Strategies were approved, printed and disseminated to a wider stakeholder base for implementation
- 8 community based solar technicians are providing solar installation and maintenance services in the communities.
- Mobilized 2 Women's Environmental Clubs (25 members each) to participate in tree planting to mitigate the impact of deforestation in Uleppi sub county who were also trained to make briquettes and energy efficient Lorena cook stoves
- RICE West Nile provided 2 start-up kits (A pack of 3 sets of molds for energy saving cook stoves, a wheel barrow, a spirit level, a spade, a shrew, a tape measure and 2 pairs of briquette molds) to each WEC group.
- 12,200 seedlings were planted (9350 timber trees and 2850 fruits) in Uleppi Sub county with a current survival rate of 84%.
- In total, 86 cook stoves were constructed and 13,865 briquettes made by the WEC members during and after their training on cook stove construction and making of briquettes.

Educating communities and stakeholders on existing legal and policy documents on natural

WWF UCO also supported Northern Albertine Network for Environment and Petroleum hosted by RICE West Nile through Oil For Development program to continually play a relevant role in community empowerment, research, policy advocacy, company compliance monitoring, information sharing and dissemination and capacity strengthening to prepare communities, CSOs, Local governments and community groups to actively and meaningfully participate in the sector in executing initiatives that Limit negative impacts of oil and gas development on nature, people and climate in Uganda.



Participants for a group work during a review on Tilings Project ESW's

- Conducted two trainings to enhance the capacity of community groups, CSOs, and media on fact-based research, documentation and reporting for effective engagement of key players in the sector.
- Parliamentarians and county/district councils put in place updated policies, legislations and regulations to manage environmental and social impacts of oil and gas activities.
- Pakwach district Local Government: Oil and Gas planning and activities have fully been incorporated into district development plan.
- Nwoya District Local Government: New district compensation rate has been passed by council to enable adequate and timely compensation processes.

Community Healthcare

Increasing access to health in under served and inaccessible communities' population in RICE West Nile's areas of operation

RICE West Nile with financial support from Paul Hodges Trust and CHASE Africa worked to improve access to family planning and other health services in Madi Okollo district. Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions RICE West Nile with support from the district and Sub County leadership, changed a number of implementation approaches such as the strict observance of SOPs from MoH and WHO, door-to-door mobilization and creation of awareness on family planning and health seeking behaviour through engaging the 50 Women Environment Club members to educate the communities in their respective villages on family planning and health seeking behaviour.

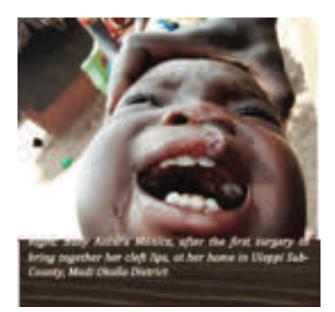


• The mass mobilization of communities to participate in the Mobile Day Clinics by the Women Environmental Clubs through the door-to-door approaches and RICE West Nile during the 6 Mobile Day Clinics (MDC) led to increased awareness among the communities on family planning (benefits, methods, effects, myths and misconceptions), health seeking behavior and thus increased access to free and non-coercive family planning and other health services by the communities of Madi Okollo district.

 RICE West Nile introduced family planning services in Uleppi Health Centre II. Uleppi Sub County has only one (1) government Health facility which used not to offer family planning services until RICE West Nile's project that introduced the services at the health centre on a sustainable basis. "We used to receive Family Planning Services from Reproductive Health Uganda and Marrie Stopes but they came once in a while and went back until the next service which could take a while. When the communities came here for repeat services and as first-time users, we used to send them to private health centres where everything is not for free so many people would withdraw their interest and return home", ... "After the support from RICE West Nile, we are now able to provide FP services to our clients on daily basis."-said the In-Charge Uleppi Health Centre II.



Ontre & Depp Sub-County, Mull Shallo Dotrett



• RICE West Nile changed the life and brought back the beauty of Asiteru Monica a 1 year and 4 months old baby who was born with cleft lips and palate through linking her to access free surgery offered by Smile Train. The first surgery on her lips was done on 9th November 2020 and the second surgery to work on her split palate is scheduled for 12th February 2021.

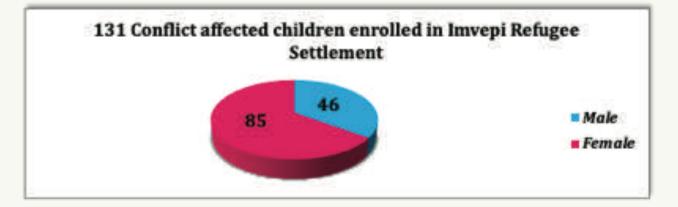
Mrs. Asuru Carolina, 48, a resident of Eteleva village, who had a long history of uterine complications that made her unable to her contribute to her household development for over 12 years was treated fully and she is able to engage in garden work and go to markets to look for resources to support her family. "I can now participate in garden work and other income generating activities like collecting firewood for sale to earn and meet my needs after getting full treatment from you (RICE West Nile) and have always wanted to say thank you but did not know how. You gave me back my life", said Asuru Carolina.

Household Resilience and Wellbeing

Contribution towards learning, skills, business and enterprise development among persons aged 4-35 years in an inclusive manner.

Among the school aged refugee population in Uganda, nearly 353,000¹ children aged 3-17years which accounts for 57% of the total school aged children are out of school. In Imvepi alone more than 37,959 school aged children are out of school.

• Enrolled conflict affected children and youth in three learning institutions in Imvepi Refugee Settlement;



• 3 peace clubs established in three institutions with membership of 143 club members who were trained and mentored on peaceful co-existence in the selected schools to empower them to take lead in identifying their challenges and raising the concerns for redress to the school administrators through club patrons.

• In total 282 (144 females and 138 males) participated in the 9 psychosocial support activities



1 Ministry of Education and Sports: Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda 2017.

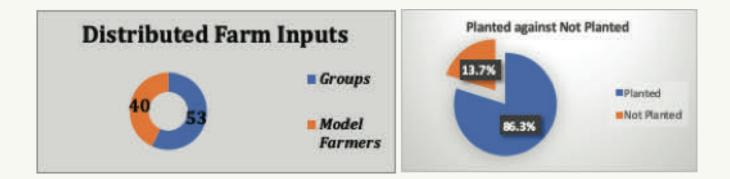
Improving the wellbeing of the PSNs, farming households and youths in refugee and host communities of Rhino Camp refugee settlement

Due to the influx of refugees from South Sudan and other neighboring countries into West Nile Districts of Uganda, there have been numerous disputes for the scarce resources e.g., Land, trees for firewood and construction, food security, shelter amongst refugees and between refugees and host communities. RICE West Nile had numerous interventions in the refugee settlements to address some of the concerns including Improving the wellbeing of the PSNs and farming households in refugee and host communities of Rhino Camp and Imvepi refugee settlement.



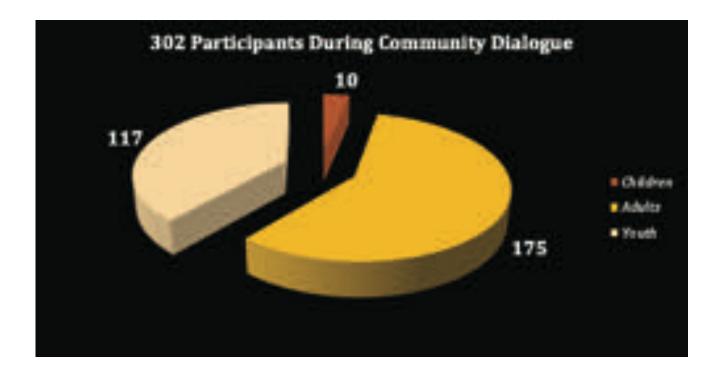
Some of the Farm inputs distributed to farmers

• Distributed farm inputs to both refugee and host farmers groups and model farmers as rapid response to COVID-19 pandemic since the access to agricultural inputs was difficult for most of the groups in Rhino Camp and Invepi Refugee settlements. During the outcome monitoring, 86.3% of the model farmers reported having planted the seeds given to them while 13.7% had not planted by the visit date. However, they committed to plant a day after receipt of the inputs.



• 25 youths from the 5 refugee youth groups were strengthened on making metal cladded energy saving cook stoves and Lorena cook stoves to generate income for the group and also promote clean cooking using energy saving stoves.

• Conducted 3 community radio dialogues between Community and local government agencies on climate resilience and natural resource governance issues.



• Procured three tricycles to provide transport for PSNs in Tika Zone, self-settled refugees in Arua City and one model farmer group in Rigbo Sub-county.

• Increased collaboration between urban refugees and Arua city local government authorities through 15 community owned resource persons whose capacity was enhanced to raise voices of self-settled refugees in the urban areas on key livelihood issues; refugees in Arua city organized four collaborative meetings among themselves to brainstorm and dialogue on key issues affecting their livelihoods in the city.

• Improved data on self-settled refugees in Arua City: with the help of 15 community owned resource persons selected among the self-settled refugees, RICE West Nile took an initiative to collect information on number of households and individuals per refugee household to develop a data base that will be incorporated by OPM and other partners in planning for the self-settled refugees at their respective settlements. A total of 1690 (823M & 867M) refugees were registered as of November 2020 from 127 households in central division of Arua City.

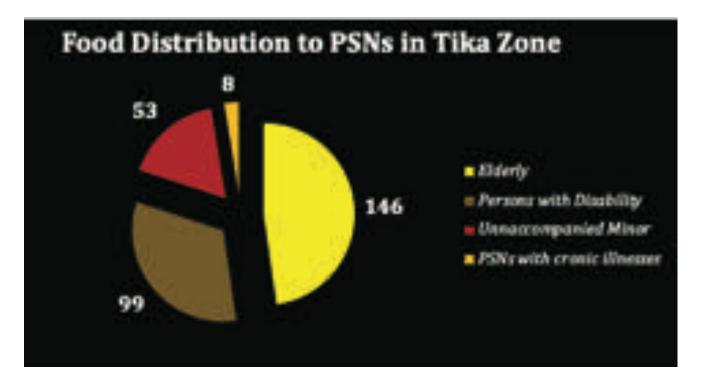


Elderly PSN with her package

• Distribute food and sanitary items to 305 most vulnerable PSN households to increasing the number of meals per day in Tika Zone – Rhino Camp refugee.

"RICE-WN came at a time when we were about to go on hunger strike, thanks to God." – Mrs. Jamba Priscilla

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The food and sanitary support package provided to the 306 PSN households included; 25kgs of first class posho, 15kgs of yellow beans, 5kgs of Pakistan type of rice, 5litres of cooking oil, 5 big packets of salt, 2kgs of soya powder and 1 tin of Lato milk powder for households with babies under five years of age, 5 bars of white star soap, 4 packets of Always sanitary pad for households with women in reproductive age and 1 face mask. During the beneficiary selection exercise conducted, 71% of the respondents reported having one meal a day - which is late lunch between 3pm to 5pm while 29% of the respondents reported having at least two meals a day. After the distribution, 86% of the PSNs reached reported an increase in the frequency of cooking in their homes compared to the situation before receipt of the support. On average, six members per household were reached through the support that saw a total of 1,781 people reached in the 306 PSN households served.

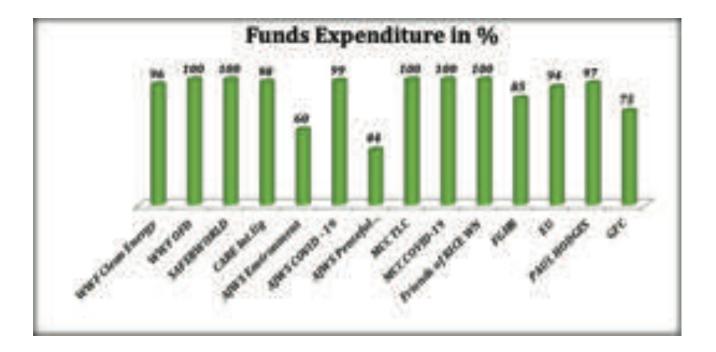


2020 Finance at Glance

2020 DONOR

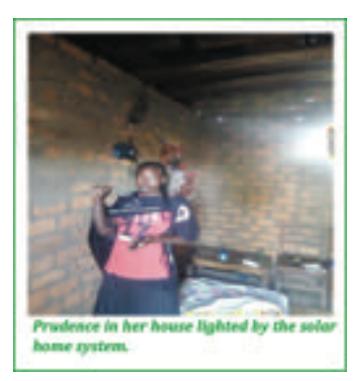
AMOUNT IN UGX

WWF CLEAN ENERGY	273,579,400
WWF OfD	100,071,800
SAFERWORLD	110,483,874
CARE INTERNATIONAL - UG	279,374,018
AJWS - ENVIRONMENT	61,200,000
AJWS - PEACEFUL EXISTANCE	216,000,000
AJWS COVID -19	43,200,000
MCC TLC	97,876,000
MCC - COVID -19	54,751,300
FGHR	18,000,000
EU	651,808,600
PAUL HODGES	41,062,500
GFC (Organization Development)	73,325,000
Friends of RICE WN	295,000,000
TOTAL	2,315,732,492



Change Stories

Supporting Rural Communities Acquire Renewable Energy Technologies (Rets) With Ease



Tadooba has been a basic requirement for every household in Anivu Village, Katrini Sub county Arua District. For decades, the entire village was living in a gloom. Alionana VSLA group member Ms. Yikiru Prudence a 24-year-old divorced mother of one child and a guardian angel to her two nephews witnessed and lived through the horrors of darkness in this village. In a night for a maximum of one and half hour, Ms. Yikiru Prudence spends at least UGX 500 for paraffin on a murky tadooba that could not survive on windy days. On bad days with no any other source of light or money for paraffin, her family would stay in darkness. The local lump also produced a lot of flame, harmful gases and smoke which was a prone cause to the rampant respiratory diseases in Yikiru's home.

"One day the tadooba started a fire that almost burnt my house but then it was rescued by the neighbours and the well-wishers who helped to put the fire out..." she narrated.

On phone charging alone Yikiru spend almost UGX 1,000 every week. Most of the times due to the low household income, she forwent charging her phone to provide for her family. With less hours to have a glimmer light. Her two (2) nephews had difficult time to study and this resulted to substandard performances in school. "....Children under my support performed poorly because of lack of light for reading at night" – she continued. Awareness campaign on CEP by CREAM under Clean Energy Project drew Yikiru's attention and she pursued to acquire a solar lamp at an affordable price and a flexible mode of payment.

She acquired a solar home system with a single bulb (SP1) at UGX 220,000, where she paid UGX 22,000 upfront. Currently, she only pays UGX 10,000 per month to complete her payment. The 500shs spent per day on paraffin and the 1000shs per week on charging has been cut down to zero costs which improved the standard of living of the household through the changes in feeding diet and improved savings in their VSLA groups.

The reading time for the children increased from one and half hour to 3 hours after the acquisition of the solar hence improving the performance of the children in school. She can now charge her phone for free and stay connected throughout the week unlike before. 4-5 hours of clear lighting is her new normal every night even when she lacks money for an entire week. As much as the solar home system cannot provide light for longer hours during rainy days, she finds it safer and harmless.

"I have no worries even if I leave my child alone playing in the room, I am not scared of fire causing harm to my child" - she says with a smile on her face.

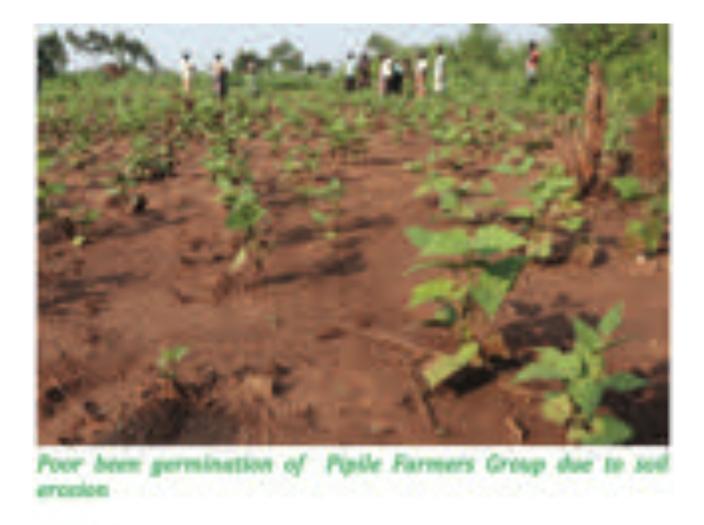
Yikiru is confident and happy that the respiratory disease cases have decreased in her family and she is now encouraging every other member in her group and village to acquire the clean energy product. She has not only cut down on her daily costs but also, improved her savings at the VSLA group from UGX 3,000 per week to UGX 5,000 and later UGX 10,000. She is grateful to CREAM Westnile, RICE West Nile and other partners for improving the lighting in her home and most importantly improving the wellbeing of her family.

RICE West Nile gives us hope

Mrs. Jamba Priscilla a refugee in Tika Zone, a widow and a mother to Maybellyn Jamba a 37-year-old daughter who lives with a disability. Feeding, Shelter, Clothing, Sanitary items, education among other basic needs has not been easy for Mrs. Jamba to provide for her family.

In April 2020, the refugee food supply by WFP was reduced up to 30% off. This was a sharp spire through Mrs. Jamba's heart and she lost hope. Mrs. Jamba saw a light at the end of the tunnel when she heard about an assessment by RICE West Nile on beneficiaries under food distribution in June 2020. Tirelessly and with hope Mrs. Jamba rolled her daughter's the wheel chair assessment center 3 kms away. Because of Maybellyn's condition she was selected to receive 25 Kgs of super posho, 5 Kgs of rice, 5 liters of cooking oil, 15 Kgs of beans, 1 tin of milk, 5 bars of soap, 5 packets of salt, 4 packets of sanitary pads, 2Kgs of soya and one face mask. The lost smiles were seen again in the faces of the daughter and her mother.

Challenges



• Low adoption of some refugee farmers on practicing smart land management practices that leads to low yields and they are not able to practice large scale farming due to land fragmentation.

• Inadequate funds to implement activities as planned due to pull out and cut off funds by donors as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, the Ugandan government declared a lockdown and banned public gatherings as some of the measures to control the spread of the disease leading to delay of activity implementation at organization level.

• Hostile relation between refugees and host communities in Imvepi and Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement affected RICE West Nile interventions during food and farm inputs distribution to PSNs and model farmers as a rapid response to COVID-19.

Adaptive and Mitigations Mechanisms applied

• RICE West Nile adjusted her work plan to fit in the available budget. RICE West Nile keenly observed the SoPs from World Health Organization and Uganda Ministry of Health while implementing her activities. RICE West Nile also used online platforms to avoid public gathering at organization level. The RICE West Nile management took an initiative to conduct three COVID-19 tests for all her staff.

• Linkages between refugee farmers with host community to acquire large farms for large scale farming by the refugees. RICE West Nile organized for agricultural experts from the district production office, model farmers and farm organization i.e. Omia Farm Organization to sensitize the farmers on the best farming practices. Some refugee were taken for an exchange visit to see what other model farmers are practicing smart agricultural practices.

• RICE West Nile has continued to mainstream peace building interventions in her programming to facilitate peaceful coexistence aimed at supporting refugees to appreciate and understand their cultural and tribal differences and embrace diversity. RICE West Nile conducted stakeholders' management meeting in the settlement and community sensitization on peaceful coexistence.



Sensitizing the farmer to use smart agricultural practices to avoid soil erosion

2020 Lessons

• Working together with the local government and COVID-19 TASK force boosted RICE West Nile management to be flexible and to adjust 2020 work plan and plan for emergency with key organization stakeholders during implementation. As a result of this Madi Okollo District advised RICE West Nile to conduct the Mobile Clinic for six day rather than two days to help reduce the number of community members gathering per day at the service center. The community awareness creation was conducted through door to door than community dialogue.

• Encouraging the refugees to not only practice farming agricultural practices but also have a diversity income generating activities like bee keeping and livestock keeping can increase their household income. • Mixed farming groups with both refugees and host communities can not only help the refuges acquire land from the host community but also encourage friendly coexistence between the two communities. There is a hostile relation between refugees and host community in Tika Zone. This call for all the partners implementing in this Zone to mainstream peaceful coexistence and sensitize the two communities to embrace diversity among them.

RICE WN 2020 Updates

2020 RICE WN staff



Gallery



10-year-old Ajal is now able to wook his bonds with soop and running water ofter he received liquid anop at his household.



Alsodroti Farmers and VSLA Group during the group sering meeting in Nev. 2020









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